

Cruzane Mountain Project Heritage Report



Photo: Cruzane Mountain Oblique 1933

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for:
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INTRODUCTION

This report discusses the results of the Lolo National Forest Heritage Program's evaluation of potential impacts to cultural resources that may be caused by the proposed actions of the Cruzane Mountain Project. All materials referenced herein are maintained at the Heritage Program, Lolo National Forest in Missoula, Montana.

Cultural resources can span both precontact and historic temporal periods, and may include buildings, structures, sites, areas, and objects of scientific, historic, or social value. They are irreplaceable, nonrenewable resources documenting the legacy of past human use of the area currently administered by the Forest Service.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The primary legislation governing cultural resource management is the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 (amended in 1976, 1980, and 1992). Federal Regulations 36 CFR 800 (Protection of Historic Properties), 36 CFR 296 (Protection of Archaeological Resources), and Forest Service Manual 2360 (FSM 2360, Heritage Program Management) provides the framework for consultation, identification, evaluation, and protection of cultural resources on National Forest System lands.

In Montana, the Forest Service conducts cultural resources reviews of proposed actions in accordance with the "Programmatic Agreement Regarding Cultural Resources Management on National Forests in the State of Montana" (PA 2015). Stemming from this PA is the "Site Identification Strategy Prepared for the Bitterroot, Flathead, and Lolo National Forests" (SIS - McLeod 2003), which is used to help identify cultural resources on the Lolo National Forest.

Furthermore, the Lolo National Forest Plan (1986) identifies two forest-wide standards specific to cultural resources (Forest Plan, page II-20). Standard 54 requires that cultural resources be considered during project planning and that inventories will be conducted prior to ground disturbing activities. Standard 55 requires the Forest to annually coordinate with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes to discuss the types and locations of proposed Forest undertakings. The Forest Plan also has specific direction with respect to cultural resources for different management areas (e.g. MAs 3, 12, and 28) across the Forest and the historic Lewis and Clark trail; however, none of it applies to the Cruzane Mountain project area.

METHODOLOGY

Analysis Area Boundary

The proposed project analysis area were those areas within the project's area of potential effects (APE). The APE for a project is identified based on the geographical extent of a project and on the activities that may affect cultural, historic, and archaeological resources at present and years to come. The APE for heritage analysis is the project boundary.

Methods for analysis

Prior to field investigation an extensive literature search was completed. Lolo National Forest Heritage Program records of previous project reports, cultural site records and surveys form the foundation of research. Field notes and hand-drawn survey routes on topographic maps were used to determine areas of previous survey prior to the use of GPS and GIS. General Land Office records were reviewed to determine areas that have cultural resources that are not recorded by the Forest Service. GIS was also used to identify legacy site data and locations of past cultural resource surveys within the project area.

Consultation with the Montana State Historic Preservation Office began in March 2017. Communication has involved file search requests, numerous phone calls with the Review and Compliance Officer discussing survey methods, site eligibility questions, site recordation for the SHPO database, and request for Smithsonian numbers for newly recorded sites.

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) and the Nez Perce Tribe were included in initial NEPA scoping. In May 2018, Lolo West Zone Archaeologist Ms. Karuzas informed the CSKT Tribal Preservation Department that the only recorded sites were associated to uranium mining. At this time, CSKT decided that they did not need to participate in a cultural review of the small project that they believed would hold little interest to the Tribe.

Survey Inventory Strategy

Pre-field investigations were aided using maps generated with Arc-GIS. Slope-based analysis was used in concert with the 2003 SIS. High probability areas have slopes less than 10% and are near a permanent water source including landforms such as river terraces, alluvial fans, confluences of two or three drainages, major ridge systems, saddles, and high mountain peaks. Medium probability areas are slope ranging between 10-20% and are further away from water, including landforms such as secondary ridge systems, spur ridges, lakeshores and cirque basins. Low probability areas include any areas not meeting high or medium criteria.

A number of other maps, including historic forest maps and historic USGS topographic maps, are used in the analysis for potential site locations. Water Resource Surveys from the State of Montana are also used to locate historic ditching or mining information that began after the US Department of Interior, Geological Surveys were completed, usually by the 1920s or earlier.

Recently, using geology information provided by the State of Montana has assisted to more effectively locate eligible mine properties in western Montana. Following similar protocol from other projects, geologic features were pulled into analysis from the Wallace and Plains geographic regions as identified by the Montana Bureau of Mining and Geology along with Abandoned and Inactive mines from 1992 and 2004. Where geological features, faults, folds, and abandoned mines were close to a unit those areas were surveyed to test the geology theory that is being developed by Ms. Karuzas.

Local information was also obtained during the pre-field research from Superior Ranger District employees. Field surveys were conducted between August 2018 through August 2019.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Environmental Setting

The Cruzane project area ranges from 3400 to 4800 feet elevation on the north side of the St. Regis River, just east of the town of Saltese. The project area is bounded by Interstate 90 to the south and Forest Road 288 on the west and north and McManus Creek on the east. The community of Saltese anchors the project area to the south west, this community and houses scattered in the vicinity of road 288 are the reason for the WUI designation. Southern exposures are dominated by ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir while northern exposures have lodgepole pine, western larch, Douglas-fir, subalpine fir, and Engelmann spruce. Primary vegetation disturbance agents are mountain pine beetle, root rot, western spruce budworm, and dwarf mistletoe.

Precontact Context

The Cruzane project area is characterized by roughly 10,000 years of hunter-gatherer land use resulting in temporary occupation sites, lithic scatters, rock cairns, vision quest sites, burials, and culturally modified trees. These sites are the result of seasonal subsistence activities and other forms of land use including lithic procurement and spiritual endeavors. Major occupation sites are usually limited to the nearby Coeur d'Alene, Clark Fork, and St. Regis River drainages, but hunter-gatherers frequented higher elevation mountainous areas during the summer months to hunt and to collect and process roots, seeds, and berries. Expectations for cultural materials that may be present in the APE depend on the age of the site (Malouf 1986, McLeod and Melton 1986).

The closest known named places are west of Lookout Pass (Palmer 1987). *Hntsegwish*, meaning “where it imitates,” may refer to the Little Coeur d'Alene River before its confluence with the Coeur d'Alene River. Downstream, the Coeur d'Alene River was called *Hnq'wtutumshkwe'*. A place near Wallace may have been called *Nilag'qn*, which means “wide forehead” or “wide surface under the hair,” likely referring to the wide mountain range that includes Lookout Pass. The headwaters of the St. Joe River south of Lookout Pass are known as *Amotqn*, or “one who presides at the head,” and they relate to a mythological story (Palmer 1987).

Historic Context

Between 1853 and 1855, Washington Territorial Governor Isaac I. Stevens led the survey efforts to identify a railroad route along the northern tier of the United States. Stevens assigned U.S. Army Lieutenant John Mullan to survey the Continental Divide segment for a “practical route” (Krueger 1964). After learning of a way through the Bitterroot Mountains from local Indians and missionaries, Mullan identified a route through the St. Regis Borgia Valley. In May 1858, Mullan began construction of a military wagon road to connect Fort Benton on the Missouri with Fort Walla Walla in the Washington Territory, near the Columbia River (Mullan 1863). Mullan began the project at the

western end, at Fort Walla Walla. By the end of the 1859 field season, the construction party had reached the St. Regis River Valley, crossing the Bitterroot Mountains at Sohon Pass (now called St. Regis Pass) (Mullan 1863). After spending the winter in the valley, Mullan's crew continued eastward, and in the spring of 1860, completed the road to Fort Benton (Winther 1945:26). However, by the winter of 1860, Mullan concluded that marshy conditions, seasonal flooding, and a wide river crossing could render sections of the route impassable, and he began to plan the road's reroute and repair. In 1861, he led construction of a new section of road north of Lake Coeur d'Alene and repaired and improved existing stretches of the road that suffered from poor drainage. Road construction was completed along the route in 1862.

Gold was discovered in Montana in the early 1850s, and the completion of the Mullan Road in 1860 provided a route for prospectors from the Pacific Northwest to begin to move into the region. In addition to the prospectors who traveled the route, teams of pack mules and wagons were regularly employed to transport goods over the Mullan Road to supply the growing population of miners in Montana (Winther 1945). By the mid- to late 1860s the flow of people and goods over the Mullan Road into Montana had slowed in the response to increasing competition from shippers based out of Missouri, and the completion of the first transcontinental railroad in 1869; however, the presence of the Mullan Road continued to spur development along its route (Winther 1945). Miners began prospecting along the Mullan Road in the Coeur d'Alene and St. Regis River drainages, and in 1865, the first gold claim was filed along the St. Regis River (Mineral County Historical Society 2004:3). Prospectors working in the South Fork Coeur d'Alene River Valley began staking gold claims in the early 1880s, and by the early 1890s, miners had branched out into extracting silver, lead, and zinc from hard rock mines along the valley (Dahlgren and Carbonneau-Kincaid 1996; Teske et al. 1961). The establishment of claims along the valley bottoms pushed later prospectors higher into the mountains and passes during the late 1890s and early 1900s.

The Northern Pacific Railroad completed their Coeur d'Alene branch line to Wallace, Idaho, by 1890, and the line was extended east in the early 1900s to service the mines that lined the South Fork Coeur d'Alene and St. Regis River Valleys. The line from Mullan, Idaho, to St. Regis, Montana, was abandoned in 1980. All of the rails and ties were removed. The highway that eventually became I-90 was constructed through the Lookout Pass area in 1922, allowing people from Idaho and Montana to more easily visit the area and Interstate 90 was completed in the 1970s (Cohen 2007:201).

Several mining districts were in the area, Packer Creek Mining District which most likely began soon after the construction of the Northern Pacific Railroad in 1891 which was anchored to Saltese and Haugan for distribution centers. The mining district is mostly located up to five miles north to northwest of Saltese. Silver is most abundant along with copper, gold, and barite were mined in the area from the Osborn fault. Uniquely, uranium is also found in this area which was first identified in the mid-1930s and reanalyzed in the 1960s.

The Forest Service also has history in the area. Federal forest management dates back to 1876 when Congress created the office of Special Agent in the U.S. Department of Agriculture to assess the quality and conditions of forests in the United States. In 1881 the Department expanded the office into the Division of Forestry. A decade later Congress passed the Forest Reserve Act of 1891 authorizing the President to designate public lands in the West into what were then called “forest reserves.” Responsibility for these reserves fell under the Department of the Interior until 1905 when President Theodore Roosevelt transferred their care to the Department of Agriculture’s new U.S. Forest Service. Gifford Pinchot led this new agency as its first Chief, charged with caring for the newly renamed national forests.

The primary purpose for the Forest Service began with timber production and watershed management. Logging has impacted our lands since the beginning of the Forest Service. Starting in the early 1900s areas were identified as suitable for timber harvest or not, and logging began. Logging operations started out with many men in the woods cutting down timber with crosscut saws that were transported either by horse or flume down to a river or railroad where the logs were taken to a lumber mill. As the years transpired, improved transportation systems and heavy equipment moved across the landscape increasing the range and diversifying the timber that is hauled out of the woods. Thus, leaving us today, with a blended environment of heavily managed timbered areas to some areas of virgin forest with a large road system and areas that have been managed for over a hundred years.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Heritage resources are in a constant state of deterioration, as man-made features age, they will continue to decay. Features that are made of wood, such as cabins, wooden flumes, culturally modified trees, or metal will deteriorate either from oxidation, or at times disintegrate as fires burn through them. Sites that consist of rock features can collapse but typically withstand better than others.

Cultural heritage sites are mostly on the ground or buried after years of vegetation growing concealing them beneath the surface. When the Forest Service proposes ground disturbing activities such as road construction, timber harvest, and prescribe burning, heritage sites may be unearthed. Cultural surveys are conducted in concert with the 2003 Site Inventory Strategy, previously recorded sites, and information gathered during the pre-field research in order to locate cultural resources.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Sites are evaluated to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and recommended to Montana State Historic Preservation Office whether they should be eligible (protected), not eligible (not protected) or not evaluated (protected).

There are ten sites within or near units that were surveyed as a result of this investigation. Eight sites are *not eligible* to the National Register of Historic Places. The Lolo NF was

unable to make a determination with the remaining two sites, and therefore will need to protect those two since they were determined *not evaluated*. Concurrence from SHPO occurred on December 18, 2019.

Effects common to all alternatives – Cultural sites are non-renewable resources. Continued natural weathering and deterioration cannot be avoided. All heritage resources are subject to these processes; regardless of this project’s implementation, these sites will continue to naturally decay.

- **Alternative 1 (No Action)** - This alternative is the existing condition.
 - **Direct and Indirect Effects**. Heritage resources are subject to natural weathering and vegetation encroachment. Tree mortality and deadfall as well as catastrophic wind or fire events can instantly damage these sites. Under the ‘No-Action’ Alternative, the sites will continue to have buildup of vegetation around the site which will in turn increase the severity of the burn at each location.
 - **Cumulative Effects** – The continual loss of heritage site due to large wildfires and tree mortality are two of the three greatest concerns for heritage resources, followed only by looting and vandalism. Looting and vandalism take and education approach, and at times monetary fines. However, the Forest Service is capable of reducing large negative impacts with proactive vegetation management.
- **Proposed Action-**
 - **Direct and Indirect Effects**. Vegetation thinning will open the landscape, helping restore the forest to a more open forested condition as it once was prior to the suppression of wildfire. Vandalism within the project boundary is not a concern as most sites are not close to open Forest Service roads.
 - The proposed action will have no adverse direct or indirect effects to protected and known cultural resources. The Heritage program gathered information working with the implementation staff to establish practical Protection Measures for each site and its features that protect the resource as well as is feasible during implementation which was submitted to SHPO for review, which they concurred on those proposals. The cultural sites will be avoided through project design and/or resource protection measures. (see [Appendix X](#)).
 - **Cumulative Effects**. The proposed action will have no adverse cumulative effects to the known cultural resources that have been determined that need protection. Additional cultural sites may be located during implementation, and following standard protocols, the Timber

Administrator will inform the archaeologist as soon as possible for further investigation.

Consistency with Forest Plan Direction and other Laws, Regulations. The proposed project is consistent with Heritage Standards for Forest Plan Direction for Management Areas. Cultural resources were considered during the planning process and inventories have been conducted. Consultation has been conducted with SHPO and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes.

Procedural review of the undertaking is consistent with 36 CFR Part 800 and the 2015 PA. Existing and new sites identified during project survey have been recorded and evaluated for the NRHP.

Monitoring Plans/Requirements – Heritage monitoring is necessary in the Cruzane Mountain prior to project implementation as well as afterwards to assess site condition. Lolo NF Heritage Program staff would flag any cultural resources to be avoided prior to mechanical and/or hand treatment. Following implementation, Heritage Staff would visit the area to ensure site damage has not occurred. It would likely take one day for flagging and one day for post implementation monitoring. Please see the project protection measures for detailed information.

There are two sites that are within units that heritage personnel recommend standard operating procedures and/or some protection measures. These sites are within the RHCA, but heritage would like to make sure that the sites are protected so that the silviculturist and timber crews know where the sites are to avoid accidental damage to the site (i.e., a piece of equipment driving through one area to get to another and could accidentally drive over a site).

A document with specific location will be written and given to the Timber Sale Administrator and to the Silviculturist that will be protected as a sensitive document, censored from the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

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